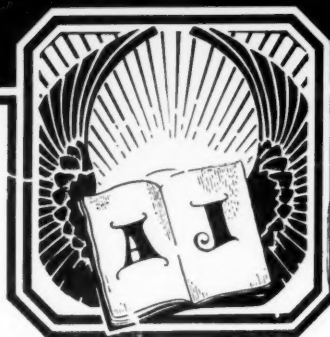


The **AUTHOR & JOURNALIST**

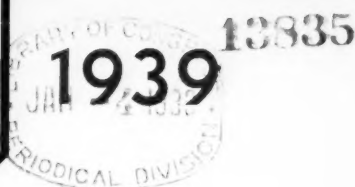
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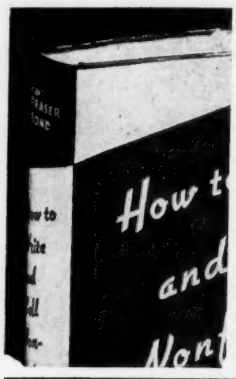


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HOW MUCH MAY WE QUOTE?

It is difficult to get a specific answer to the frequently asked question: "How much is it safe to quote from a published work without permission from the copyright holder?" Eve N. Alger, of San Francisco, passes on an authoritative answer which comes as near to being a definite statement as it seems possible to secure. Here is her letter:

As writers are often at a loss as to what course to pursue when using quotation, the following excerpt from a letter from the Copyright Office in Washington, D. C., may be of value to A. & J. readers:

"Concerning the right of an author or publisher to use quotations, without special permission, from copyrighted works, it is pointed out that the answer would depend in nearly every case upon the special facts and circumstances, and hence the courts have not attempted to lay down any hard-and-fast line of demarcation between the permitted use and the forbidden use of copyrighted works. It is to be observed, however, that the Copyright Act secures to the proprietor (among other things) the exclusive right to 'print, reprint, publish, copy and vend the copyrighted work.' It also provides that the protection shall extend to 'all copyrightable component parts.' This of course does not mean every particle of the work, but it does cover the work as a whole, and also any substantial and material part thereof. The information conveyed is not subject to copyright, but only the literary or artistic expression.

"On the other hand, the courts have recognized that a copyrighted work is subject to 'fair use,' in the way of criticism and review, for example, and that it may be commented on and quoted without permission in so far as may be necessary to make the comments intelligible. It is not so much the quantity as it is the quality of the part taken that may be the important factor, including also the use to which it is put. One must use his own judgment in such matters, obtaining where necessary the advice of legal counsel. If there is any doubt, the safe course always is to secure beforehand the consent of the author or proprietor for the contemplated use of his work."

In practice, the quotation of a continuous paragraph or two or selected passages from various parts of published work are frequently encountered, and we know of no case in which such quotations have been chal-

lenged. Some authorities assume it as an unwritten law that excerpts up to 400 words may be used; but this arbitrary rule is hardly dependable. In some cases, 400 words would constitute so large a proportion of the copyrighted material as to be "a substantial and material part thereof." Which leaves us still with nothing more definite than the quoted statement: "One must use his own judgment."

□ □ □ □

SUBMITTING TO MAGAZINE GROUPS

The question is frequently asked whether it is advisable to submit a manuscript to another magazine of the same group, after it has been rejected by one. As a rule, we advise against doing so, as rejection usually means that the manuscript is unsuited to all magazines of the same type under the same banner. Ed Bodin, New York agent, writes the following letter which is pertinent on this subject.

Writers can take advantage of the method of submission used by several agents and professional authors in submitting stories to the various pulp houses. So many magazines are published by these concerns that to submit to a certain magazine is unnecessary. Once you have a list of the types used by each pulp house, just submit your story to the editorial director to cover one or more magazines of that type. The only exception is Street & Smith in the Western field, where John Burr and Ronald Oliphant read for different Western action magazines—namely, Burr for *Western Story* and Oliphant for *Wild West*; and also Anthony Rud for *Detective Story* and *Clues*, John Nanovic for *Crime Busters*. A love story will go to Daisy Bacon, a Western love to Marion Millhauser, and an adventure to John Nanovic, if you don't mention the magazine.

Of course, if you slant your story at a definite magazine, it is well to say so; but the manuscript will reach the editor of that type if it is just addressed to the Editorial Director, Such-and-Such Company, with a notation in the corner of the envelope, such as "Western Action Story." If it is accepted, the editor will decide in which of the Western magazines he wants the story published.

And every time you see a new title on the stands, don't rush with a submission until you find out if the editor of that magazine has already read it for his house. It may mean just a waste of postage. Editors know that a new magazine means an avalanche of duds, and they hate that.

□ □ □ □

REPLY ENVELOPES FOR POSTAGE ECONOMY

Relative to the postage question, George A. Strader, Elmhurst, N. Y., sends a suggestion which deserves thought. We happen to know that his plan is followed by a number of writers whose volume of work and percentage of sales justifies it. Mr. Strader writes:

An even more important angle of the postage question that was raised in several of your recent issues is on the domestic side, and lies in the very distinct savings that may be made by high-production writers through the use of business reply envelopes.

There was a time when the post office department would not issue permits for these envelopes unless the user guaranteed to use a minimum number monthly. This minimum rule has now been removed, and their use is open to writers generally. What this means to high or fairly high production workers may be deduced from the following figures.

MSR apr 7/42

I normally have about 900 pieces of copy going out each year, requiring about \$70 of return postage on the enclosed envelopes. Now, about 80 per cent of my stuff sticks the first time out and some \$56 of return postage is either wholly wasted or, in a few cases my 6-cent or 9-cent return envelope is used to send a check that never requires more than 3 cents.

The use of the business reply envelope completely eliminates this waste. I have to pay no postage on anything not returned. I must pay only the regular rate, plus 1 cent, on rejections. Yet the editor always has a post-free return envelope and, if he wishes to send me a check in it, it costs me only 3 cents plus 1 cent.

Inasmuch as the envelopes can be purchased for a few dollars a thousand, the amount of the saving is obvious. It would not pay a small producer, of course, or one whose sales average is low, but a \$50 or \$60 saving in return postage is not to be sneezed at by even the largest of the trade and juvenile producers.

No formalities are involved in getting such a permit. Here in New York City applicants must first have their envelope set up in type, in the prescribed form, leaving space for the permit number; they must then submit proofs to the post-office department. They sign a short application and a permit number is assigned to them. This is given to the printer, who completes his setup and goes ahead. The one number may be used on all sizes of envelopes and post cards. This procedure is designed to eliminate the many New Yorkers who

collect such things as autographs, sea shells, celluloid stove lifters, and permit numbers, with no intention of using them. But it is not hard here and it may be easier outside of New York.

□ □ □ □

EVEN THE AUTHOR MAY PROFIT

We present this month another article on fiction-writing craftsmanship by Sewell Peaslee Wright.

Mr. Wright, whose articles are unfailingly popular with A. & J. readers, gives us practical material because he has the knack of revealing the methods which prove out in his own fiction-writing. For example, with reference to his article, "Suspense Is a Bridge," which appeared in the September, 1938, A. & J., he wrote to the editor:

"After I wrote it, I was intrigued with some of the thoughts I had clarified for myself, so I sat down deliberately to apply them. With this end in view, I wrote three stories. Two of them have now sold for a total of \$1000 even—and both were under 1500 words. I thought you might be interested in knowing that even the writer of an article can profit by what appears in the printed pages of good old A. & J.

"I have found that the way to profit by my reading in the field of journalism is to sit down immediately and make a definite effort to apply the principles suggested. Generalizing doesn't help. I say to myself, 'O K. buddy; I'll give your method a whirl and see if it works for me.' I think too many writers simply read, and don't immediately apply the suggested idea, principle, hint, or whatever it may be."

BOOKS RECEIVED

HOW TO WRITE AND SELL NONFICTION, by F. Fraser Bond. Whittlesey House. \$2.50.

Although there are many books on fiction writing, it is difficult to find comprehensive works on nonfiction. This book, by a practical writer and teacher of writing, therefore fills a decided need. Dr. Bond, formerly professor of journalism at Columbia University, in this book deals in detail with the main types of nonfiction now in greatest demand. Five chapters are devoted to the feature article in its various forms, and one chapter each to specialized forms, such as the Article of Opinion, the Process Article, the Sunday Supplement Article, the Interview and Personal Sketch, the Newspaper Column, and others, as well as the nonfiction book.

PROFESSIONAL WRITING, by Walter S. Campbell (Stanley Vestal). The Macmillan Company. \$2.

The purpose of this book, by the director of courses in professional writing, University of Oklahoma, is to fill the gap between the usual manual of English Composition and the handbooks which teach how to write short-stories, novels, and plays. The topics capably covered include, among others, the following: The Choice of a Subject; the Choice of a Reader; the Choice of a Model; the Choice of an Effect; the Choice of a Style; the Choice of a Market; the Choice of a Project; Methods of Work; Arithmetic; and Enthusiasm.

THE AUTHOR'S HANDBOOK, by Edward Monington Allen. International Textbook Co., \$1.50.

The twofold purpose of this handbook is to encourage a closer bond of understanding between the author and his publisher, by pointing out how they may best cooperate to expedite the creation of the printed book, and to acquaint the author briefly with the many intricate details of the publishing industry. It deals, in other words, principally with the mechanical and business procedures involved in issuing a

book. Such topics as The Publishing Agreement; Preparation of the Manuscript; Copyright Procedure, are clearly covered.

PRACTICAL RADIO WRITING, by Katharine Seymour and John T. W. Martin. Longmans, Green & Co. \$2.00.

This book answers the need for an up-to-date, comprehensive work on the technique of writing for broadcasting. Both authors have been writing for radio continuously since 1925. Their first book, "How to Write for Radio," published in 1931, was the recognized authority on the subject at its time. For nine years Miss Seymour was assistant script editor of the National Broadcasting Co. Mr. Martin for the past ten years has been a member of the radio staff of Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborne. The book includes several sample scripts, and covers its subject in full detail.

MAGAZINE WRITING AND EDITING, by Mitchell V. Charnley and Blair Converse. The Cordon Co., New York. \$3.25.

This elaborately printed and bound work—352 pages, 9 by 12 inches in size—is directed more toward the editor than the writer, perhaps, but should prove of great value to the latter by giving him an insight into the editor's problems. Typical chapters are entitled: What Happens to a Manuscript; the Story of an Issue; the Editors at Work; Creative Editing; the Experience Article; the News Feature; the Process Article; the Information Article; the Article About People; Magazine Departments; What to Write About; How to Get Material; Relations With Editors; the Rights of An Author; Production Biography of Your First Accepted Story. A complete issue of *Better Homes and Gardens* is reproduced as a means of illustrating how manuscript is handled in the editorial office, how it is illustrated, how the pages are designed and revamped into a finished product.

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

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JANUARY
1939

SIGNIFICANCE IS A KEY

... By SEWELL PEASLEE WRIGHT



Sewell Peaslee Wright

HERE'S a key.

What it will open for you, I don't know. Too many people already have discovered the "secret" of the successful short-story.

If there were such a "secret," and I knew it, I'd be so busy cruising the South Seas in my Diesel-powered yacht, or taking that trip up along

the eastern shore of Hudson's Bay that I've wanted to take for lo, these many years, that I wouldn't have time to write this for you.

But after nearly two decades of writing for publication, and more than a decade of trying to help others get the hang of the thing, a fellow does dig out a few ideas which may be helpful, and which seem worth passing along to the craft.

Whether this is an original idea I don't know. I have never seen nor heard this material presented in this form, or from this angle of attack. It may be as old as the pyramids. But . . . and now we take the plunge! . . . it seems to me that *all* of the factors which we think of as important in creating a story, center more or less directly upon a *single* factor, and that factor I choose to call SIGNIFICANCE.

What is "significance," as I use the term? Well, it is the antithesis of that element in a story, or lack thereof, which causes the "So what?" reaction on the part of a reader. Let's

take up at random various accepted elements of a story, and demonstrate the part they play in building up significance.

Characterization comes first to mind. You read in the newspapers that there has been a great flood in India, and five thousand men, women, and children . . . even pitiful babes in arms . . . have been wiped out. You read of mass murders in Spain, or in China, under the guise of "undeclared warfare." You shake your head, and perhaps you murmur a word of pity . . . and then you pass on to an article which tells of a huge watermelon a local farmer has raised, or who entertained who at a pot-luck supper.

The item on the slaughter of thousands makes a very slight impression because it isn't significant to you. All these people who were wiped out are not your people. They are strangers, foreigners, unknowns . . . hardly real persons at all.

But, before you've finished the paper, a Special Delivery letter arrives. It tells you that your sister, in a neighboring city, has broken her leg in a fall from a step-ladder, while cleaning windows.

Now there's excitement indeed! You arrange to send flowers. You dash off a wire offering any needed help. You repeat, many times, that you've warned her against climbing ladders. You worry for days about Sis, and how her husband and the kids will make out, and whether the financial strain is going to be a tremendous set-back to them, following so soon after the husband's long lay-off at the factory, and the birth of little Sally Ann, their youngest.

Now, as I see it, this contrast shows clearly the contribution of good characterization to a story. The death of the five thousand flood vic-

tims means little or nothing to us because of what amounts to bad characterization. They are not real people to us, any more than are the characters in a story written by one who has not learned how to make human beings of the people who stalk through his pages.

Sis, on the contrary, *is a real person*. We know her face and figure and her background. We know her voice, her little tricks of personality; her hopes and fears and ambitions. These things have endeared her to us. We're upset about her little mishap, while the death of the five thousand strangers leaves us cold.

If further proof be needed that these things are so, then let me point out that should you read a sob-sister's illustrated account of the flood, in a Sunday supplement a few months hence, you'll react to this description of the flood disaster much more strongly than you did to the news item, because the sob-sister will make those people more human and more real.

Another example, perhaps more commonplace: the newspaper accounts of murders are confined to the presentation of the facts. Later, you read of the same case in a "true detective" magazine. The latter story has infinitely more "wallop" . . . simply because in the magazine the characters are clothed with reality; we become more intimately acquainted with them.

Good characterization, then, undoubtedly does help increase the significance of a story. Now let's see what plot contributes to significance.

Sometimes we run across a story with terrific action. A man and his wife start out some Sunday morning for a long ride in their car. They are stopped by grim-faced state policemen, and searched. They go on. Proceeding down a country road, they are held up by a brutal trio of gangsters, armed with Tommy guns, and their car is taken away from them. On foot, they proceed to a farmhouse. The doors and windows are open, the family car stands in the driveway, but there is no answer to their knock. Finally, they hear a moan. They enter, fearfully. They find a man and a woman, weltering in their own blood. The man is dead; the woman still lives. They put her in the car and drive like mad to a neighbor's house; they learn where the nearest doctor lives. Arrived at the doctor's house, they find him to be a strange, dark man with mad eyes. Instead of trying to stop the flow of blood, the doctor places the injured woman on his operating table and starts a strange experiment on her brain. Our friends try to stop him, but he makes prisoners of them both, and proceeds. The husband at last manages to free his wife from her bonds; tells her to run for help. She does. Neighboring farmers come swarming.

They have been suspicious of the old doctor and his strange ways. The husband is freed, the doctor is made prisoner, the injured woman is rushed to the hospital. The husband and wife thankfully return home after their exciting holiday.

Action? Good lord, yes! Plenty of it. Exciting action, too. But it all has no significance, and the plot is therefore very bad. The story fails utterly to produce any dramatic effect, despite the hectic activity of the lead characters.

But suppose we plot soundly. A man and his wife have reared an adopted child. They have neglected to tell the child that she is adopted. And now she learns the truth. A sensitive creature, she turns on the people who have been so generous, so self-sacrificing. They have hurt her; her first blind instinct is to strike back. Deeply grieved, and afraid they will lose their precious daughter in their old age, they reason with her. She will not listen. They plead with her, but it is no use. She demands the name of her real parents. She gets the information finally, and goes to them. They are doing well financially now; they are happy to have this beautiful creature. The mother explains tearfully the bitter poverty which caused them to put the child up for adoption. We can skip subsequent action, and come to the end. The foster mother and father, fine and generous, and wishing above all things to have the girl happy, call her to their home . . . that had been her home also.

They give her a legal release from the adoption, that her actual parents may claim her in fact as their daughter. Her actual parents, in their improved financial position, can give her far more than can the foster parents, who are plain, middle-class people with a modest income.

And then, in last, full understanding comes to the girl. She realizes that this man and this woman have been more than natural parents; that they took her from love, and not from necessity; that they have sacrificed not for one who was flesh of their flesh, bone of their bone, but one whose only claim upon them was the claim of love. This last sincere gesture of unselfishness and renunciation is too much for the girl; she puts her arms around her foster parents, and knows that they are near and dear as her actual parents, who were selfish and indifferent in the beginning, can never be. And if we handle the thing properly, there's a tear in more than one eye as we wind up our story.

Well, what does all this prove? It proves, to me, that sound plotting adds significance to a story.

The lurid action of the first example failed to move us because it lacked significance. It aroused the "So what?" feeling in us. Lots of

things happened, but they had no significance.

In the second example, very little action occurs. But, somehow, what does happen is significant. We are moved by the thought of these dear old people confronted with the possibility of a loss which will wreck their lives. We are vitally interested in every move the girl makes, because every move she makes is significant: it will affect the lives of these good people who were her foster parents. Too, we watch her actual parents anxiously; much depends upon them, and what they do and say. Here, again, we're interested because of significance. And in our big closing scene, we're tense because every word and move and action is fraught with significance. What the girl does *means something*; we know that it will have an *effect*.

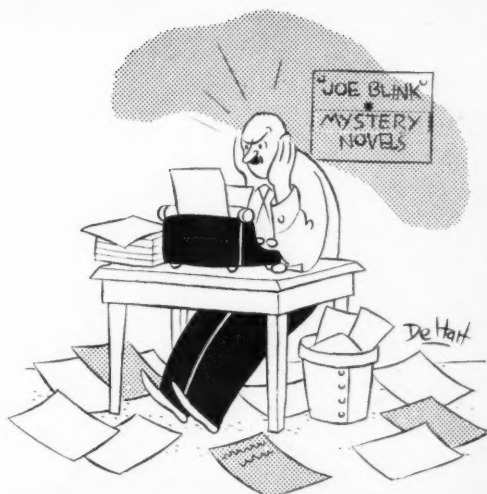
Action without effect is action without significance, and all such action you could cram into a story wouldn't help in the least, if you included all the crimes in the calendar, and every variety of violent death a fertile mind could create. But we may hang with the utmost anxiety upon such a trivial bit of action as the nod . . . or the shake . . . of a pretty head.

The difference lies in the degree of significance we, as readers, have been made to attach to the action.

My old "Detour Theory" which many of you will remember, and regarding which I have had so many, many words of deep appreciation, is valuable primarily because it tends to keep the writer within bounds. All action along the "Detour" is *significant* action; it has a direct relation to the things the protagonist is trying to accomplish. So far as plotting is concerned, it automatically takes care of the significance factor, if the detour is actually followed.

Now let's consider theme. Without resorting to long examples, I think it is evident that a theme which is timely and personally appealing has significance to a given reader. A theme which is threadbare, or antiquated, or otherwise unappealing, lacks significance to the reader. He is not interested in the theory which is to be proved, and therefore the action resorted to by the author, in order to prove his point, is without significance, and hence without interest.

The same test may be applied to background, or locale. If I'm doing a story of the North, and if extremely cold weather plays a definite part in the story, and is therefore significant, I am justified in building up my background accordingly. I may take paragraphs to point up our hero's steaming breath, which forms hoarfrost on the fringe of his parka hood; the snap and crackle of frost-riven trees; the rifle-like, echoing reports of the ice on the lake; the thick white coating on the windows, that even a



"CONFOUND IT! HERE I AM ON THE LAST CHAPTER AND CAN'T REMEMBER WHO THE MURDERER IS!"

red-hot stove cannot dispel. And in that story, the general geography of the land may be scarcely mentioned. The temperature is significant, and the geography is not. In my next yarn, the reverse may be true.

Background emphasis may properly be placed only upon that material which is significant; otherwise your reader will have the feeling that you were merely trying to "show off" by introducing a lot of matter not pertinent to the story, and the end result is irritation. Irritating a reader . . . or an editor! . . . is obviously bad business.

Making a story dramatic is a problem with a great many beginning writers. A thorough understanding of the importance of significance will help tremendously in creating drama.

Sometimes a certain bit of business creates drama because the significance of the action is automatically understood and appreciated. A speaker tears down from the wall our national emblem and wipes his feet upon it. We react instantly to this, because the significance of the action is obvious to us.

In another story, a lead character has a trick of wetting his lips before he goes into action, or a scar on his face becomes a livid streak, or he shifts his weight to his left foot, and hunches forward slightly . . . to enable him to flip his six-shooter more quickly from that low-hung, tied-down holster! The first time this business is introduced it is *not* significant, because we don't know what it presages, but the second or third time the character does one of these things we hold our breath and wait for something to happen . . . because that bit of action has become significant!

If you've done any writing at all, you've used "plants." The purpose of probably more than

half of all "plants" is to give significance to something which occurs later in the story.

I said at the outset that *Significance* was a key. Like all keys, it may fit some lock in your possession. Again, it may not, for not all minds react to the same stimulus.

As I see it, these thoughts on the subject of significance may serve you in two ways. You may find that some things said here will help you devise and develop a more effective story. You may find that these remarks will help you merely in revising a story; that they will serve as a sort of acid test in helping you to determine what is to be added, left in, or taken out.

At any rate, I hope I've opened up for you another avenue of thought on that very important (to you, and to me!) matter of writing better stories. There are scores of avenues by which we may approach the ideal piece of fiction; scores of vistas which have the same shining central point.

It seems to me we gain by becoming familiar with all these avenues, and all these points of view, for there are times when one will serve our purpose better than another, and the more

tricks of the trade with which we are familiar, the better, and the more easily, we may follow that trade.

The master trick is in using all these tricks simultaneously and automatically; remember how your golf pro teaches you to keep your left arm straight, to get power out of the "whip" of the club, when to shift your weight, to keep your eye on the ball, not to dip the right shoulder . . . and then insists that you mustn't forget any one of them, but must remember them ALL, during that split second from the time you start the down stroke until the ball is away and the club is poised somewhere over your left shoulder?

As writers, we have a huge bag of tricks, but we don't have to use all of them in a split second in order to secure the equivalent of a screaming three-hundred yard drive straight down the fairway. We can have days and days to use the little tricks we know to make our stories better.

It strikes me we should be grateful for this break, and not neglect to use every one of the known devices for shooting par on every yarn we turn out!

SOME HINTS ON TITLES

. . . By KENNETH A. FOWLER

This is really an addendum to the article last month entitled "Grinding to a Pulp" by Mr. Fowler, former copy editor for Street & Smith.

ASIDE from the question of good honest use of the King's English, writers who are grinding it out to the pulps should be aware of the importance editors place on the titles of stories they buy. An arresting title is considered highly desirable from the editorial viewpoint, and the writer who gives this matter thought, and submits titles which do not have to be changed, is building himself some extra good will.

It was editorial routine in my office for copy editors to prepare a list of three or four suggested titles for each story edited. Then the editor would make a selection, sometimes retaining the author's title, but more often selecting one of the suggestions of the copy editor. Usually the author bangs out the first title that comes into his head; other times, he has simply been unable to think of a good one. But it is a mistake for writers not to put some effort on titles. Not only are good ones considered highly important by the editorial master minds, but a striking title will be the first thing to catch the editor's eye when he picks up your manuscript. Therefore, make it as zestful and editorially provocative as you know how!

I might cite with benefit a few examples of editorial reactions to good and bad titles. I personally liked the agreeably alliterative quality of "The Troubadour of Truculento," by William Colt MacDonald, but the editor wondered rather worriedly if the pulp audience wouldn't falter on the "Truculento" and accordingly selected my title, "Jinglebob Jenkins, Trouble Trailer," which also has alliteration and is, in addition, a bit more explicit.

"The Devil Had Four Sons," a serial by Stuart Hardy (Oscar Schisgall), was ruled out because it lacked the Western flavor, and so became, after considerable editorial travail, "The Miracle at Gopher Creek." And Mr. Schisgall liked the new title so much better than his own that he wrote the editor about it!

"The Angel of Mesa Bend" was thought too anemic for a red-blooded Western book, and emerged from the editorial title mill as "Gunfire Gold in Silver Town." "No Killers Wanted" was changed to "The Unholy of Jackson's Hole," and "Wanted: A Man," eventually hit the stands blazoned as "The Fighting Fool."

"Sweet Waters" was altogether too sweet, and was rebranded "The Raiders of Lost Canyon";

"The Yucca Kid" wasn't bad, but nevertheless became "The Branded Avenger," which was a great deal better; and "Frozen Gold" was stretched till it came out of the wringer as "The Ghost of Golden Glacier."

Luke Short's title of "Brand of Empire" for a serial was critically adjudged a bit highfalutin, and was accordingly juggled at the behest of the editor to "Red Trail to Black Treasure." And a Jackson Gregory serial, rather feebly entitled "Wandering River," emerged from a three-cornered editorial conference as "Gun Thunder in Ghost Town."

One more sample, and you will perhaps begin to get the idea: namely, that pulp editors want titles that are arresting, that catch the eye, stir the senses, and act as pulse-quickeners and interest-arousers. One of the important rea-

sons for this, although not the only reason, is that the headline novel or serial is often advertised on the front cover of the book, and editors have a feeling that a good hot title helps to sell magazines. Thus "Saddle Feud" as the title for a 20,000 worder was regarded as altogether too tame, and when the editorial conference had turned on the heat, came out with a sizzle as "The Gun Fiends of Crazy Creek." I seem to recall, incidentally, that the title was better than the story.

Select your titles with care and thought. Editors place greater stress on titles than most writers are aware, and if you can furnish the editor with a good one to start with, it saves him time, money and effort, and believe me, he will appreciate saving all three!

WHAT TYPES OF VERSE SELL BEST?

. . . By MAY WILLIAMS WARD

Mrs. Ward is a Kansas writer whose work has appeared in such periodicals as Saturday Evening Post, Good Housekeeping, Ladies' Home Journal, Judge, New York Sun, New York Times, Kansas City Star, Poetry, and minor publications

VERSE writers, as a rule, like to sell their stuff, if only to vindicate themselves for the time and effort put into their effusions and for protection against the askance looks unpublished poets often receive. Husbands or wives laugh much more convincingly at a partner's humor if it has brought in a small check; club women sigh more deeply at a soulful reading if it is prefaced by a careless remark that the piece was published in *So-and-so Magazine*.

It is a strange thing, but after the emotional spill of making a poem is over and a certain time has elapsed, the idea may be clothed in any one of several different ways. Pick out some good journeyman verse of yours, and just for a stunt try to fit it into three of the below classifications. Make a different dress for each, or perhaps you may be able to transform it by a twist at the end. Then, if your purpose is to sell, try out the three versions on the different kinds of markets and see if your experience tallies with mine. Analyzing 730 sales of verse in about 15 years, to more than 50 publications, I find humorous verses easiest of all to sell.

By easy to sell, I mean that a larger proportion of those written are sold, and also that they sell in fewer trips out in the mail.

The various types, ranged in order of their salability, according to my experience, are as follows:

1. Humorous verse, very short and with a sharp climax.
2. Verses for or about children, under 16 lines.

3. "Moonlight and roses" . . . the equivalent of the young love short-story. But never use this or similar trite phrases. Freshness and simplicity are essential.
4. Verses of purely masculine appeal . . . sly but not bitter digs at women, praise of dogs, fishing, etc.
5. Nature poems. Avoid the "pathetic fallacy" of making natural objects have the feelings of humanity, but sales-chance is improved if a likeness to the problems of humanity is implied, not stated openly.
6. Regional verse, full of colorful characters or characteristics of your own environment. A Kansan sells many verses about tornadoes, the dust bowl, cowboys, pioneers.
7. Religious verses . . . not overly pious, but tender and sincere.
8. Poems of today's social and racial conflicts, of war, etc.
9. Philosophical and symbolic poems.

There is a payment in satisfaction and pleasure to be had in publication in the special verse magazines which pay nothing or in prizes only; but read these magazines before submitting, to make sure their editors are discriminating, so that satisfaction and not humiliation will result when your verses are printed in that particular company.

After all this talk about which types are easiest to sell, there is one more angle. The difficult verses to sell, when they do sell, are all the more precious to the proud poet-parent. So bolster up your morale with some easy-selling ones, then tackle the task of getting the best and subtlest thing you ever wrote into print.

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST'S ANNUAL

HANDY MARKET LIST of VERSE MAGAZINES

Compiled by VIRGINIA SCOTT MINER

Mrs. Miner, the compiler of our directory this year, has contributed verse to a wide variety of publications, including *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Pictorial Review*, *New York Times*, *New York Herald-Tribune*, *Fiction Parade*, *Country Gentleman*, *Household*, *National Parent Teacher*, *Kansas City Star* and many of the strictly verse magazines. The *Lantern* devoted its entire September, 1938, issue to her verse.

VERSE MAGAZINES MAKING CASH PAYMENT

Poetry, 232 E. Erie St., Chicago, Ill. Founded by Harriet Monroe. George Dillon, editor. (M-25) \$6 per page, Pub. Several annual prizes of \$100 given for best poems in magazine during year.

Poetry Digest, 220 W. 42nd St., New York. Alan F. Pater, editor. (M-25) Reported to pay \$1 per poem.

Poetry Presents, P. O. Box 812, Burbank, Calif. C. Henry Hicks, editor. (Q-20) \$1 per poem, Pub.

Rhythm, 925 Broadway, New York. Alice Langley, editor. (M-25) 20c a line, Pub.

Silhouettes, 303 Rosewood, Ontario, Calif. James Neill North, editor. (Q-35) \$1 per poem, Acc. Verse market lists featured in each issue.

Sonnet Sequences, Box 1231, Washington, D. C. Murray L. and Hazel S. Marshall, editors. (M-10) Petrarchan sonnets only. \$1 each for single sonnets; varying prices for a sequence.

Spirit, 386 Fourth Ave., New York. John Gilland Brunini, editor. (Bi-M-35c) Organ of Catholic Poetry Society of America. Publishes work of members only, but has no religious requirement as to membership. (Fee, \$1 per year). Free criticism for members. Pays 20c a line, Pub.

VERSE MAGAZINES OFFERING PRIZE CONTESTS AND AWARDS AS PAYMENT

Bard, The, 398 Russell Ave., Jackson, Mo. Margaret Ferguson Henderson, editor. (Q-35) Cash and other prizes. Not interested in mediocre material.

Bozart-Westminster, Oglethorpe University, Ga. James Routh, editor. (Q-50) No welcome for trite, old-fashioned versifying.

Blue Moon, 1830 R St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Inez Sheldon Tyler, editor. (Q-50) Prizes \$1 to \$10. Prefers short, not too sophisticated poems.

Cycle, Homestead, Fla. Lily Lawrence Bow, editor. (Q-35) Prefers rhymed verse up to 20 lines.

Fantasy, 950 Heberton Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. Stanley Dehler Mayer, editor. (Q-25) Favors but does not require free verse.

Kaleidograph, 702 N. Vernon St., Dallas, Texas. Vaida and Whitney Montgomery, editors. (Q-25) Free contributor's copy of the annual anthology. Features an annual book-publication contest. A \$100 prize each quarter. Prefers short, rhymed lyrics.

Lantern, The, 62 Montague, Brooklyn, N. Y. C. B. McAllister, editor. (Bi-M-25) Devotes one or two issues a year to the work of some one contributor. Annual book-publication contest or anthology of best poems submitted during the year. Free copy sent each writer represented.

Lyric, The, Box 2552, Roanoke, Va. Leigh Hanes, editor; Geoffrey Johnson, British editor. (Q-25) No taboos as to type of verse, but uses more short lyrics. Not interested in any but the best of contemporary work.

Palms, Grant, Mich. Elmer Nichols, editor. (M-25) Verse of any form or theme if good. Book reviews and literary essays.

Poet Lore, 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass. John Heard, editor. (Q-\$6 a year) Only high quality verse wanted. Originals or translations; any length. Payment in copies of the magazine.

Poetry World, 79 Fourth Ave., New York. Henry Harrison, editor. Any form or theme considered; modern-experimental as well as conventional.

Stepladder, The, 4917 Blackstone Ave., Chicago, Ill. Flora W. Seymour, editor. (M-except July to August 20c) All forms and lengths. Formerly limited to Bookfellow members.

Shards, Box 2007, Augusta, Ga. Constance Deming Lewis, editor. All types of verse if not too long. One \$10 and one \$5 award each issue besides general prizes. Reviews and literary articles.

Skyline, 167 Public Square, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. Lucille Chenot, poetry editor. (Q-15) No restrictions as to form or theme so long as it does not offend good taste. Complimentary copies sent contributors.

Talaria, 500 Palace Theatre Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio. B. Y. Williams and Annette Patton Cornell, editors. (Q-35) Mostly rhymed lyrics. Some reviews and verse-news-personals.

Verse Craft, Emory University (Atlanta), Ga. Lawrence Wilson Neff, editor. (5 issues—\$1 a year) Cash and other prizes for each number awarded by ballot of readers.

Voices, 45 E. 55th St., New York. Summer address, Vinalhaven, Me. Harold Vinal, editor. (Q-\$2 a year) Interested only in the best work of contemporary poets.

Wings, Box 332, Mill Valley, Calif., Stanton A. Coblenz, editor. (Q-\$1 a year) Out of market during June, July, Aug. Nothing bizarre in theme or form wanted. Has just taken over **Avon**.

SPECIALIZED VERSE MAGAZINES—INCLUDING THOSE GIVING PREFERENCE TO MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS

Aerial, 645 South Mariposa, Los Angeles, Calif. Byron Dunham, editor. (Bi-M-\$1.50 a year) Organ of Radio Poets' Club. Contests over KFVD. Cash prizes.

American Fireside, Verse-Land Press, Otsego, Mich. Albert Emerson Brown and Irene Lillian Brown, editors. Brief lyric type. "No free sample copies." Also publishes **The Verse-Land Anthology**, with \$75 in prizes.

Berkeley Poetry Magazine, 221 W. Broadway, Paterson, N. J. James Gabelle, editor. \$2 a year) Organ of The Berkeley International (Episcopal) Poetry Society.

Circle, The, Box 194, Wellesley, Mass. Marcia L. Leach, editor. (Q-35) \$1 to \$5 paid for the three top-ranking poems of each issue. More work by non-subscribers used now than formerly.

College Verse, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyo., Ann Winslow, Exec. Sec'y. (M-\$2 a year, Nov. to May, incl.) For undergraduates, mostly. Annual awards and monthly prizes. Better query first.

Driftwind, N. Montpelier, Vt. Walter John Coates, editor. (M-20) Regional, descriptive, idealistic ballads, lyrics and other forms up to 50 lines.

Garrett, The, Box 5804, Cleveland, Ohio. Flozari Rockwood, editor. (Q-35) Features two to four contributions an issue. Book reviews. No inferior work considered.

Pasque Petals, Aberdeen, S. Dakota. (M-35) Mainly for S. Dakota poets. No outside verse solicited. Edited by Gertrude Gunderson, Mitchell, S. Dak., and Adeline M. Jenney, Valley Springs, S. Dak.

Westward, 990 E. 14th St., San Leandro, Calif. Hans A. Hoffman, editor. (8 issues—\$2) "Interested in good verse of all kinds."

VERSE MAGAZINES WHICH IN GENERAL OFFER NO PAYMENT OR PRIZES—INCLUDING SOME PERIODICALS ONLY PARTLY DEVOTED TO VERSE.

American Weave, 1559 E. 115th St., Cleveland, Ohio. Loring Eugene Williams, editor. (Q-\$1 a year) Interested in lyrical verse.

Better Verse, Medford, Ore. Irl Morse, Phyllis Trullinger and Thos. Del Vecchio, editors. (Q-\$1 a year)

Country Bard, The, Madison, N. J., Thibaud Terrace, editor. (2 issues a year—\$1) Seasonal verse. No propaganda.

Expression, 221 W. Broadway, Paterson, N. J. James Gabelle, editor. (Q-25) Verse up to 28 lines.

Frontier and Midland, Missoula, Montana. H. G. Merriam, and Grace Stone Coates, editors. (Q-40) Sample copy, 25c. Literary material of all types, including poems of the Northwest.

L'Alouette, 114 Riverside Ave., Medford, Mass. C. A. A. Parker, editor. (BI-M-50)

Poetry Caravan, Rt. 1, Lakeland, Fla. Etta Josephine Murfey, editor. (Q-25)

Prairie Schooner, Station A, Lincoln, Neb. Lowry C. Wimberley, editor. General literary periodical. About 10 poems an issue. Up to 60 line lengths.

Prairie Wings, N. Rockford, N. Dakota. Grace Brown Putnam and Anna M. Ackerman, editors. (M-\$1 a year).

Quickening Seed, 124 W. Frambes Ave., Columbus, Ohio. Clarence L. Weaver, editor. (Q-25)

Southern Literary Messenger, 109 E. Cary St., Richmond, Va., F. Meredith Dietz, editor. (M-35) Revival of magazine once edited by Edgar Allan Poe. Taboos on religion, politics, war-scares.

Visions, Alpine, Calif., C/o Rancho Monte Vito. Sand Dune Sage, editor. (BI-M-\$1 a year) Lyrical verses in general.

Zyphyr; also **Vespers**, 966 E. 25th St., Paterson, N.J. Henry Picola, editor. Overstocked.

VERSE PUBLICATIONS REPORTED DISCONTINUED

Arrow, 1609 C. Ave., Lawton, Okla. Hopes to resume.

Avon, Detroit Mich. Has been merged with **Wings**.

Gypsy, The, 6th and Walnut, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Horizons, East Pasadena, Calif. Has just been taken over and merged with **Verse Craft**.

Limerick Digest, 20 W. 60th St., New York. Mail returned unclaimed.

Midland Poetry Review, 854 South Harrison St., Shelbyville, Ind. Hopes to resume in 1939.

New Rhapsody, Southward Station. Box 2450, Philadelphia, Pa.

Phenix, 35 Warren Ave., Detroit, Mich.

Post's Friend, Stanberry, Mo. Sold to **Visions**; former editor an honorary officer in **Visions**.

Post's Messenger, 54 Dennison Ave., Dayton, Ohio.

Smoke, 218 E. 36th St., New York. Mail returned unclaimed and marked "Out of business."

Virginia Verse (in the **Commonwealth**)

"BUT IT IS TRUE!"

. . . By EDWIN L. SABIN



Edwin L. Sabin

MAY Heaven bless the friends who grapple us with stories that must be good stories for us because they are true stories! The knowing writer nips off a morsel of the bait—say a dramatic situation or an adaptable character—and stows it away for pot-luck. The unknowing writer dutifully swallows hook, line,

and sinker and looks to the gratitude of prospective editor and readers when he delivers the prize.

Facts may be stranger than fiction but taken straight they are less interesting to the palate. A pet peeve of the writer disappointed in the reception of his story manuscript faithful to facts sounds the wail: "But it is true!" Who cares? The editor loves a liar who can get away with his yarn. Truth must prevail in customs, speech, characters, scenes, action and reaction. There shall be that factual illusion. But the course of the story may admittedly be an artificial arrangement to sustain interest, and to argue the reader into the belief that these things had to occur by a logical development.

After all, a story is an argument not for the remarkably possible but for the certain, even if surprising outcome, as governed by events.

I don't recall one fact-life story told to me or culled from print which could be used in its narrated form. When tackled as a pattern these hand-outs prove to be not velvet but fustian, full of holes and frayed at the edges. And the same holds with the "fact story" manuscripts that come to my desk, confident of the fiction market.

The trouble with stories that stick to the facts and follow the order of facts? Well, these facts generally need asserting. The travel diary of an overlander by covered wagon is a day-by-day adventure beset with facts that have no story values. But take one incident, lay out a compelling incident and a consequential incident and a closing incident—whether invented, borrowed elsewhere, or shifted about in the mess; connect them by the give and take of action with characters to suit the need, and you may have a story that reads like the real thing.

In the "true to facts" story we find inconsistencies, actions uncontrolled—mere happenings and not reasonable. A great many true stories are based upon remarkable coincidence, highly dramatic, but fatal to a plot. Or when in our ardor we come to transcribing the layout, we ramble through a series of incidents, a succession and not a governed sequence of facts, even though leading to a climax.

That is likely to be the way with real, factual

Mr. Sabin is a veteran writer whose stories have been published in scores of leading magazines. Of late years he has devoted his time largely to criticism and writing instruction.



"IT'S A PERSONAL LETTER FROM THE EDITOR! HE SAYS YOU'VE BEEN COLLECTING TOO MANY OF HIS REJECTION SLIPS AND IN THE FUTURE HE WILL BE COMPELLED TO CHARGE YOU FOR THEM!"

life. We have no insight to tell us why this and that occurred. In a fictional story inspired by a measure of fact we play the god, and by pulling the strings we make things start, continue, and result so and so. When we dish up a fact story we do our own cooking.

For nearly all fact narrations can be improved. They require manipulation not only to stage them in story form but to make them believable.

There was the fact story of the couple who went for a summer in the mountains and left their decrepit old dog with the caretaker at home. The dog finally trailed them through one hundred miles and turned up just in time to save his mistress in a forest fire. Guided his master to the spot where she was. Remarkable, dramatic—and coincidental; believe it or not. But when, with story-teller's easy conscience, we changed the story so that we had the old

dog long dead under the home hedge, and conceivably faithful in spirit—then, believe it or not, the story sold. A dog gone to the happy hunting grounds is a free agent.

We have the fact narrative about a sawed-off Western peace officer whom I knew. A "get-your-man" story. He took the lone winter trail to the isolated cabin where the desperado was holed in with supplies and a Winchester. Arrived afoot in late afternoon, called upon the fugitive to surrender, was defied, announced that there would be a finish show-down by the law in the morning. He made camp, and by his determined presence worried the fellow awake all the night. At daybreak he marched in on the cabin, with gun ready, the desperado warning him back with Winchester muzzle and rabid curses. Then the fellow caved and delivered.

But as it turned out, the Winchester was empty. That seemed just too bad. The officer didn't know, but his anti-climax, as he told the facts, spoiled the story. The empty rifle suddenly became an obvious fact, which is another weak joint in the "really happened" story.

What to do about that? Why not reverse the situation—make the sheriff's feat in over-awing the desperado even more striking? In the story our sawed-off's potent Colt had been disabled, the afternoon before, by the fall from his horse. Of course, the desperado didn't know it and the reader wasn't allowed to know until the story close. The officer in fancy knew it all along, under his hat; the officer in fact doesn't know it yet, unless he has read the story with its fiction twist.

I beg of you, ladies and gentlemen, to beware of that ready-made, the "strictly facts" story which apparently needs only paper and envelope and one-way postage. If it all really happened that way it is probably not life as the story consumer wishes to have life.

VIVISECTION

By IDA M. PIERCE

The woman rose and with firm steps walked to the table and laid her child before the consultant. She had seen the pitiful remnants of other children after he had finished with them, but it couldn't happen to her child. Hers was a perfect specimen.

The diagnostician adjusted his spectacles and examined the child thoroughly. He frowned and shook his head.

The woman's spine straightened and the triumphant look changed to a look of surprise when she heard him say:

"This must come out. That is bad. This must go. No, that won't do."

For an eternity she watched him mutilate her offspring, and then he left it with her.

With set face she slowly left the room bearing what remained of her first brain-child—the title.

IDEAS INTO STORIES

... By MYRTLE CLAY

"Putting Thrill Into Your Pulp Love Story" by Myrtle Clay, in our November, 1938, issue, brought so many appreciative letters and demands for more, that we persuaded her to contribute this article, telling how she gets ideas for her love stories.

THE developing of a slight idea or incident into a finished plot is one of the mysterious processes which every writer is compelled to master. Few indeed are the ideas that come to one in complete form—fully recognizable as story plots. But the most trifling occurrence may grow into a story, if properly nursed and expanded.

The love-pulp field has very definite requirements as to plot. The story must concern itself primarily with love, and the psychological reactions of the girl who is in love. Setting and plot complications must be made to serve this end—they must never be ends in themselves.

In its simplest terms, the love story presents the difficulties of a girl in love. She may be in love with the wrong man in the beginning; she may have to compete with a rival—either another girl, or a profession, or a strata of society; but she must fight with courage for a solution to her problem, even though she is fairly swamped with trouble, and love must always come out on top. This is the basic formula, but each story must be developed around an individual idea which makes it different from all other love stories.

Where and how are we to get these individual ideas? Perhaps I can best illustrate by telling how some of them have come to me—and how the fleeting suggestions were evolved into stories.

One evening a friend with whom I was riding mentioned that during the holidays she had gone to a dance in a mining camp and had created a sensation by wearing a very formal gold dress. That sounded like a good incident for a story. I began asking myself questions and thinking about the kind of girl who would be apt to do that, and in a few days, the story was written.

Of course the heroine must be young—young enough to be romantic and to take her troubles seriously. She is going to wear a gold dress to a dance in a shabby, dingy mining camp, where she will be conspicuously out of place.

Obviously, she must be spoiled. Obviously too, she has money to spend, or she could never have afforded that dress—the other people in camp didn't have clothes like that.

Why does my heroine wear such a dress? Why, if she has clothes that are so costly, and

so formal, is she here, anyway? Why isn't she in New York?

Well, suppose she had been in New York, in a fashionable girl's school. There she had every whim satisfied. Then what in thunder is she doing out west here, now?

Her father has sent for her to come live with him. Father, who was wealthy, and who had spoiled his only child, has taken her out of school and expects her to accompany him while he drives from mining camp to mining camp selling machinery. And our heroine, beautiful, spoiled and sulky, is making life miserable for him.

But how can she be the stuff of heroines, and at the same time be mean to her father?

Because she feels that she has cause to be angry, thinking that father took her out of school in order to get her away from the man she loves. She thinks that if she pouts and scolds and is disagreeable enough, father will give her the money she wants, let her go back east and marry the man she has chosen.

Now we're beginning to get some place. She's fighting for the man she loves, in the only way she knows how to fight, and that's always good stuff.

She fights with the young mine superintendent who rebukes her for being so disagreeable. He will turn out to be the hero, in the end, and it's almost a necessity for the hero and heroine to fight!

To add to the trouble, she pretends to be engaged to the mining man, hoping to make her father angrier. But when the father is glad, and the young man is silent, she finds herself in a mess—a mess that grows worse as days pass and the wedding day draws nearer.

Marriage without love is always a good situation, and here we skirt the edges of it. We know, of course, that something will happen, but there is a piquancy to the situation of the heroine getting involved seriously with the wrong man.

Finally things are cleared up, with explanations and realizations, and the girl considerably sweeter in disposition as she and the mine superintendent go into the final clinch, floating on clouds of bliss up to paradise.

That story was published in a love pulp magazine last July.

One day a friend and I looked at a new apartment that had just been opened. We pretended that we were actually hunting an apartment, whereas we were both settled with our families. We asked questions and poked into corners, and had a very good time, pretending.

So, because we always like to read stories based on some happening common to us all, and that, I was sure, was a common enough happening, I wrote about a business girl who had no intention of leaving her boarding house, but who was so attracted to a certain apartment that she had to go back to see it, time after time. In order to explain her interest, she pretended to the caretaker—young, handsome, and thrilling, of course!—that she was engaged to a sailor and that when he came home they would marry and settle down. The poor girl got into a lot of trouble, through liking the caretaker so much, and yet being engaged to the entirely fictitious sailor. In fact, we all three—the girl, caretaker, and I—nearly had nervous jitters before things cleared up and the caretaker turned out to be the owner of the apartment, and the girl turned up in his arms. That story made a slick magazine, and helped a lot in my Christmas shopping.

Once, for days, I carried around a mental picture of a girl crying in a drug-store booth. And a curious young man peering over the wall of the next booth at her. By and by I got tired of looking at the picture, so I started making up a story about it, in order to see what was coming next.

It sounded like college—drug store, girl, and boy.

Why should the girl be crying? Didn't she make a sorority? Maybe not—but we are writing romance. We've got to have a man as the cause of those tears, and we need to get him into this story right away. Maybe her boy friend stood her up.

Why would he? Well, if she didn't join a sorority, and he was an important big shot—but *not* the real hero—he'd cool a bit.

How did he come to be interested in her in the first place?

They knew each other back home. They had been practically engaged. He promised to look out for her when she came to college.

She came late, because Aunt, with whom she lived, had been sick. That would excuse her for not knowing any one, and yet allow her enough glamour to be the heroine. And we must always provide for that. You've got to prove, in some way that is convincing to your reader, that

your heroine is really attractive enough to be a heroine. In this case, the young man in the booth proved that for us. He was a campus leader, but practically allergic to women. However, the sweet simplicity and honesty of our heroine attracted him, and he took her places, making her the sensation of the season.

But this girl is having much too easy a time so far so let's make things harder. She has to suffer, if we're going to have a story. How? We might try another woman. A plain one, with money and social position. We'll throw in a couple of kisses for thrill as we go along. It nearly always seems a good idea to provide a scene in the story where there is a preliminary kissing to help build up the thrill for the final fade-out.

So, we'll have the man in the booth do the preliminary kissing, out under a tree that night. We'll have the pseudo hero do some, too. That will make the other woman jealous, and hurry her into announcing her engagement. The heroine is simply broken hearted and disillusioned after that. It doesn't take long for her to see that she had never really loved the man from home; he is selfish, shallow, and vain. When he offers to come back to her and leave the other girl, she sees it all clearly, and realizes that she has fallen in love with the other man, who, of course, has loved her from the instant he saw her crying into her coke.

That story was featured in an early fall pulp magazine.

Love pulp stories however, as a rule are handicapped a little by college settings; there is more demand for New York society, office settings, circuses, and the movies. College, when used, seems to be mostly a musical-comedy idea of college.

Incidents and pictures are all around you. Select one, and begin asking yourself questions. What kind of girl would do this? Why? When? And with what result? Choose the answers that mean glamour and romance. Be sure to take love problems seriously, and make the most of every opportunity for revealing the heroine's emotions. Make the heroine gallant and wilful rather than sweet; make your hero proud, ambitious, and stern, but with a thrilling tenderous underneath his sternness.

Add a dash of humor, and two dashes of heartbreak, with an ultimate happy ending. And pretty soon, you will find a sort of mental movie unrolling within you. When it unrolls far enough, sit down and write it. That's all there is to it.

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST'S LITERARY MARKET TIPS

GATHERED MONTHLY FROM AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES

The Coast (Innis Bromfield, San Francisco editor, 130 Bush St., San Francisco; Edward Bosley, Los Angeles editor, 8741 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, Calif.) appearing monthly at 15 cents per issue, is in the market for material. Mr. Bosley outlines the present needs as follows: "We are in the market for high standard quality fiction of the incidental type, preferred length between 1500 and 2000 words. Longer material, however, will be accepted if it carries the necessary impact. Any sort of story, humorous, satirical, or serious in tone, is welcome. We prefer stories with a West Coast background and written by West Coast writers, but no story, if it meets our standards, will be barred. Our fiction rate is \$15 up per story on publication. We desire articles up to 3500 words on any West Coast subject, with photographs if the material seems to call for them. What we desire is behind-the-scenes material. Our rate of payment is \$25 up per article on publication. We use cartoons and pay from \$7.50 up. We also consider cartoon gags. Photographs in series telling a story are desired. What we want is an interesting pictorial tale of anything important, exciting or excessively unusual on the West Coast. With set of photos a typewritten page or two explaining the story is required. Also, each separate photograph in the set must have a slip attached explaining what it is about and where it fits in the series. For acceptance a photograph series must have not only good photographs but a solid editorial idea behind it. Payment per set, \$20 up, on publication."

Flying Aces, 67 W. 44th St., New York, was somewhat incorrectly listed in our December Handy Market List. It belongs more properly under the "Aviation-Boating" classification in the miscellaneous list than under the "War—Air—Air-War" classification of the pulp group. Herb Powell, editor, calls attention to the fact that the magazine is given over principally to model-building and fact articles. While some fiction is used, it is produced by the same regular writers each month and there are no fiction openings for the free-lance.

Westways, 2601 S. Figueroa, Los Angeles, Calif., is published monthly at 20 cents a copy by the Automobile Club of Southern California. It was formerly called *Touring Topics*. Phil Townsend Hanna, editor, desires articles up to 1500 words on Natural Science, Geography, History, Biography, Romance and Traditions—all Californian. Occasional short-shorts, not over 1200 words, are used, but they must have a California background. Verse, up to 20 lines, is desired. Material is paid for on acceptance, rate subject to negotiation.

The Sea, 844 Wall St., Los Angeles, Calif., issued monthly at 25 cents, uses articles from 1000 to 3000 words in length on yachting. Humorous yachting verse is desired, maximum length four 4-line stanzas. H. B. Warren, editor, writes: "We use very little fiction; mostly discussions of matters of interest to yachtsmen, ideas for improving yachts and their equipment, accounts of events, plans of new boats, etc." Cartoons and photographs are desired. Payment is at 30 cents per column inch.

Associated Midwest Newspapers Syndicate, 160 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, has been discontinued.

Popular Science Monthly, 353 Fourth Ave., New York, has purchased *Mechanics and Handicraft*, heretofore published by Standard Magazines at 22 W. 48th St., New York. The two will be combined, with *Mechanics and Handicraft* added to the *Popular Science Monthly* masthead.

The Stet Company, 1445 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, is about to publish a monthly magazine devoted to the work of beginning authors, according to a statement received from Gerda Grimm, editor. "We would like political, sports, and other articles of interest; fiction, and some poetry. Articles should be around 1000 to 2000 words. We are placing no definite word limit on fiction at present. Our rates vary according to length and quality of material accepted. Minimum rates are 1/4 cent per word."



"I'M TIRED OF THIS SISSY STUFF. DON'T YA HAVE ANYTHING ABOUT FAIRY GANGSTERS?"

The Eye-Opener, Bob Edwards Publishing Corp., Corn Exchange Bldg., Minneapolis, Minn., is at present in the market for humor of all varieties. Phil Rolfsen, associate editor, states: "Skits and sketches up to 600 words, jokes, jingles, epigrams, cartoons, and anything having a hearty laugh in it, are welcomed. We like lowbrow comedy rather than sophisticated humor. Material may be spicy but we are striving to present the comedy in life without resorting to material that is risqué or offensive to taste. Due to various complications which arose after the *Eye Opener* was temporarily barred from the mails last summer, time of payment has become somewhat indefinite. However, we are slowly working out of our difficulties and soon hope to be back on schedule. Rates are from 50 cents to \$3 per item."

Vindication

Said Oscar Wilde in turmoil riled:
 "Oh, why was I not told
 That the brain can hold,
 In a tiny, ivory cell
 God's heaven and hell?"
 Said Willy Write with all his might:
 "Oh, why was I not told
 That the brain can hold,
 In solid ivory cells
 What best friend never tells!"

• • •
 Brave, beaten plodders, on the way,
 You must have your little say.
 Rise to memory as we go
 That alone great God can know,
 Who a breath of heav'n will blow—
 Twenty years a man may fail,
 In the end Fame's Hall to hail!

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THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, Dept. AJ,
 Springfield, Mass.

The Old Editor

A NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

At lunch with a great editor last week, I asked
 him for a New Year's Resolution for authors. His
 mind flashed back to a weather-beaten manu-
 script lying on his desk—one that had been sub-
 mitted to him more than a year previously, the
 author hoping against hope that some day editors
 wouldn't remember it and it would sell.

The editor said: "The best New Year's resolu-
 tion for any author, is to destroy his duds of the
 past year. Too many authors carry these duds
 from year to year as assets, when they are only
 liabilities. Until an author has the strength to
 tear up his poor jobs, he is not a successful
 author.

"Why carry these old manuscripts—always a
 temptation and a postage expense? Usually the
 author kids himself by saying that some day he
 may revise these stories. But revision of a dud
 is a greater expense than time spent on a brand
 new one.

"Build new yarns—don't repair old ones—is my
 advice. The only place for old stories which have
 been tried and found wanting—is the trash basket.

"I have never known an author who wasn't
 afraid to destroy his duds, who ever regretted it.
 Even when he is famous and might be able to
 sell some of those old ones to cheap markets on
 name strength, he is better off to have them out
 of his record; for by publishing them he is run-
 ning the risk of starting himself downward, in-
 stead of continuing upward on the freshly oiled
 track of his present skill."

Thus, duds are dangerous. If you keep them
 around, some day they might explode and dam-
 age the reputation you have made on perfect
 stories.

THE OLD EDITOR.

The Home Friend, formerly at 1411 Wyandotte St.,
 Kansas City, Mo., has moved to new quarters at 549
 W. Randolph St., Chicago, according to word sent to
 a contributor by the editor, Miss Leona Johnston.
 However, inquiries concerning submitted material,
 made to the latter address, have failed to elicit a re-
 sponse.

Wall Street Journal, published by Dow, Jones &
 Co., Inc., 44 Broad St., New York, reports that its
 "Pepper and Salt" column is "pretty well supplied."
 This column is now edited by Emil Berger, his pre-
 decessor, Theodore S. Fox, having passed away last
 summer.

California Arts and Architecture, 2404 W. Seventh
 St., Los Angeles, Calif., issued monthly at 25c, edited
 by Jere B. Johnson, deals with home, gardening,
 building, landscaping subjects as well as more general
 material. Articles from 500 to 2000 words in length
 on anything pertaining to California are used. Short-
 shorts, with a California background, constitute the
 only fiction used. Mr. Johnson reports that, other
 things being equal, a short article with photographs
 stands a better chance than a lengthy article. Verse is
 used, but no payment is made. Payment for prose is
 at 1 cent a word on publication.

Canadian Poetry Magazine, Box 491, Station F,
 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, is a quarterly published by
 The Canadian Authors' Association. It pays \$60 an
 issue in prizes, reports Managing Editor Nathaniel A.
 Benson.

Hollywood Love Romances, 461 Eighth Ave., New York, is a new Fiction House quarterly using complete novels, novelettes, and short-stories with motion-picture background and love interest. Fiction House pays good rates on acceptance, but as most of its magazines are quarterlies, it is usually overstocked.

Foster & Stewart Publishing Corporation, 77 Swan St., Buffalo, N. Y., Henry F. Stewart, president, writes: "You may wish to mention in your publication that we are publishers of books in the non-fiction field. We are interested in seeing book scripts in the educational, personal-experience, adventure, and juvenile fields. No fiction. Authors should *not* send scripts without sending first a letter giving a synopsis of the script which they wish to offer." Mr. Stewart does not state what arrangements are made with the author, so it would be well to request such information when querying him.

The Patriot Digest, Oyster Bay, Long Island, N. Y., has appeared on the newsstands as a pocket-sized quarterly apparently using only reprint material.

Events, 1133 Broadway, New York, edited by Spencer Brodney, defines its requirements as "well-written, authoritative articles on national and international affairs, free from propaganda or prejudice." Length limits are 2000 to 3000 words. Rates paid are "by arrangement."

Sky Aces, 67 W. 44th St., New York, writes that its fiction needs are cared for for some months to come.

Newsstand Publications, RKO Bldg., New York, issuing various pulps under the Red Circle banner, are reported to be interested only in male Western yarns, not Western romances. Rates, 1/2 to 1 1/2 cents a word, on acceptance.

Paul Chadwick is now associate editor of *Wild West Weekly* and *Sport Story*, of the Street & Smith group, 79 Seventh Ave., New York.

The former Hollywood Newspaper Syndicate has been reorganized as Film City Syndicate, writes William J. Burton, Jr., managing editor. Features and photos will be handled.

Fassett's, 708 Buchanan Road, Durham, N. Car., is a quarterly magazine interested in the work of new writers. Paul Ader, editor, states that rates paid are 50 cents to \$1 a line for poetry and 2 to 4 cents a word for short-stories, and that all types of material are used. However, writers should query the editor before submitting. Mr. Ader does not state whether payment is made on acceptance or publication.

Psychology Magazine, formerly at 404 Fourth Ave., New York, is now apparently a member of the Lex Publications group at 381 Fourth Ave. Letters of inquiry to it concerning material published but long unpaid for are answered from this address by the editor, who refers authors to Frank Z. Temerson, business manager. Letters to Mr. Temerson (in cases brought to our attention) receive no reply. Lex Publications also publish *Silk Stocking Stories* and *High Heel*, and have disclaimed responsibility for amounts due authors for stories published in the past in these magazines. No reports have been received indicating whether the reorganized company is paying for material currently purchased.

United States Camera Magazine, 381 Fourth Ave., New York, has made its appearance. It is a quarterly devoted to photographic reproductions and articles about photography. The editors are Edward Steichen, Anton Bruehl, Paul Puterbridge, Willard Morgan, Phillip Andrews and Tom Maloney. Elmer Lasher is art director. Requirements and methods of payment are not at hand.

Direction, Darien, Conn., is overstocked with fiction at present.

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Jane Hardy was formerly on the editorial staff of Macmillan Company. She is highly recommended by Harold S. Latham, Ida Tarbell, Henry Goddard Leach, Hamlin Garland, and others.

Send for circular, and for letters of recommendation from George Horace Lorimer, H. L. Mencken, John Farrar, William C. Lengel, H. E. Maule, William Allen White, Marie M. Meloney, H. C. Paxton, Fulton Oursler, Thayer Hobson, Marjory Stoneman Douglas and others.

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Criticism Editing Advice
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Los Angeles, Calif.

The Toronto Star Weekly, 80 King St. West, Toronto 2, Ontario, "is in need of romantic novels, short detective fiction, short love stories, and short shorts of all kinds," writes Archibald H. Newman, fiction editor. "Both for novels and for short-stories our great need is for narratives that both women and men will enjoy and in which the love instinct plays a part in the plot. That is to say, we need love-adventure, love-mystery, marriage problem, divorce, young love, sports, and Western stories. The more timely a story, the better chance it has of being accepted, and the preference will be given to those which move the reader to tears or laughter and leave him satisfied. There are exceptions to every rule, but, generally speaking, unless the story has over-riding merit or distinction, we avoid the following: sexy stories that are vulgar (divorce and triangular stories are all right if delicately handled); smart-alec dialogue; stories with a newspaper background or stories about reporters, writers, magazine or newspaper people; United States gangster plots; stories with a United States historical, naval, or military background; religious themes; sea stories of novel length, or stories concerning the insane. We are using one first-run novel every week. Such a novel should be 51,000 words in length but could be longer provided it may be cut. We are now obtaining first North American and second Canadian serial rights outright." *The Toronto Star Weekly* pays good rates, varying according to the material, on acceptance.

B'nai B'rith Magazine, 70 Electric Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio, effective January 1, 1938, will change its name to *The National Jewish Monthly*. The scope of the publication is being enlarged.

Martha Houston Publications, Inc., 19 E. 47th St., New York, which publishes *Promenade*, a magazine distributed to guests of the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria, will issue a similar publication for guests of the Hotel Pierre. The name has not been released.

Everyday Photography has been acquired from Haig-Kostka Publications by Ace Magazines, Inc., 67 W. 44th St., New York.

American Lady, 570 Seventh Ave., New York, is a new magazine for women published by Mary Th. Gronich of *Current Digest* and edited by Miss Grace F. Caldwell. Information on requirements and payment for material not yet at hand.

Louis A. Langreich, managing editor, and Frederic Majer, editor in charge of sports and aviation departments, announce their resignation from *Young America*, 32 E. 57th St., New York. They will form a new feature syndicate with headquarters in New York.

The Book Prevue, 7 W. 15th St., New York, is announced as a new monthly magazine for publishers. It will list forthcoming books, native and foreign, and will contain a further section open to authors entitled "What They Would Like to Write," in which writers will state themes about which they would like to write and offer manuscripts which have not yet been sold. It is stated that no charge will be made for such announcements. A third section will be entitled, "What They Would Like to Publish," and will act as a mouthpiece for publishers searching for certain types of material. Alfred O. Mendel is editor.

Atlantica, 33 W. 70th St., New York, is now edited as a digest devoted to articles of interest to Americans of Italian origin.

Paramount Syndicate, Inc., 540 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, is retiring from business, according to word received by a contributor.

Photo Art Magazine, Monadnock Bldg., San Francisco, Sigismund Blumann, editor, writes: "We have our own list of authors and do not care to have manuscripts submitted except by invitation."



LATONA LEINANN

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Up Beat, 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill., issued monthly at 10 cents and edited by Carl Cons, is in the market for articles on modern and swing music from 500 to 2000 words in length. "Fiction is used, short-shorts of 100 to 500 words; also from 500 to 1000 words." Jokes, jingles, cartoons and photographs are desired. Payment is on publication at 1/2 to 1 1/2 cents per word. News items are used.

Twice a Year, 509 Madison Ave., New York, has appeared as a semi-annual review under the editorship of Dorothy Norman. It is devoted to literature, the arts, and civil liberties.

Imagination!, Box 6475, Metropolitan Station, Los Angeles, Calif., published monthly at 10 cents, and edited by Morojo and Forrest J. Ackerman, is a science-fiction "fan" magazine. It is in the market for news of scientific fiction, fantasy, the weird, and "reviews, previews, and interviews of or with films, fiction, legitimate or radio plays, books, authors, fans. Short-shorts, 100 to 500 words, are the only fiction used. These must be scientific fiction, fantasy or weird "Ohenryarns." Verse up to 50 lines, jokes, jingles, and cartoons are desired; also news items concerning scientific fiction. Payment is on publication at 1 cent per 20 words.

Rob Wagner's Script, 9492 Dayton Way, Beverly Hills, Calif., issued weekly at 10 cents, is of the *New Yorker* type of magazine, using short material, satiric verse, cartoons, etc. No payment is made.

PRIZE CONTESTS

Modern Romances, 149 Madison Ave., New York, offers prizes ranging from a first of \$1500 to seven sixth prizes of \$200 each, for real-life stories. The announcement states: "You need no literary skill to win. Simplicity and frankness are the essential requirements. *Modern Romances* is looking for genuine real-life stories based upon actual happenings, told honestly and fearlessly. It may be the story of people you know, of the people next door, or perhaps even your own." An instruction booklet will be sent to inquirers. Stories must be in the first person. No length limit is stated. Full details appear in current issues of the magazine. The closing date is March 31, 1939.

Mercury Books, 570 Lexington Ave., New York, offer a prize of \$500 for a new title for the novel "Indelible," by Elliot H. Paul, now current in this series on the newsstands. Suggestions must be submitted on a coupon printed in the book or a facsimile. Entries must be postmarked not later than midnight, February 6, 1939.

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The service you have rendered me to date—in both your departments—is the best I have had from any source. In respect to your careful and sympathetic treatment of submissions and also your quick handling of them. You do not suffocate with your paternalism, nor seem to regard me as definitely on the moronic side. Of course I don't know any too much about the technique of writing, or I wouldn't have come to you for so much help. But, ye gods! What some of the other critics do! There ought to be a law.

This is typical of many, many letters in the files of the A. & J. Criticism Service and its allied Agency Department. Sympathetic, authoritative advice from A. & J. critics may prove to be just what you need. Details and fees covering both services are outlined on back cover page.

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Scribner's Magazine announces that it has joined with Random House, Inc., to sponsor a short novel competition. The purpose of the competition is to encourage authors to write short novels dealing with contemporary life in the United States. The five best Short Novels will be published in *Scribner's Magazine* and then will be brought out in a volume by Random House. The authors of the five winning manuscripts will be awarded equal prizes of \$800 each and will share in royalties earned by the book. Following is a summary of conditions:

1. The competition is open to everyone except employees (and their families) of *Scribner's Magazine* and of Random House.
2. Short novels must be modern in time, American in setting. (A foreign setting may be used if the characters are American and the theme or complications used are of direct interest to Americans. An example: Elick Moll's Short Novel in December, 1938, *Scribner's*.)
3. Manuscripts must not be less than 15,000 or more than 25,000 words.
4. The judges will be the editors of *Scribner's Magazine* and of Random House, and their decision will be final.
5. Only original material, never before published in any form, will be eligible.
6. Unavailable manuscripts will be returned as soon as they are rejected, irrespective of the closing date of the contest.
7. All manuscripts must be accompanied by return postage.
8. Writers may enter as many manuscripts as they wish, though no more than one prize will be awarded to any individual.
9. The award of \$800 serves as payment for publication in *Scribner's Magazine* and as an advance against book publication. In addition to this payment, each winning author will share in royalties earned by the book over and above the \$300 advance paid him for book rights.
10. In addition to the five winning Short Novels, *Scribner's Magazine* hopes to buy as many other contributions as are worthy of publication. If a short novel is selected for immediate publication in the magazine, it will be paid for at regular rates and this will in no way affect the judges in their decision. If the story is awarded a prize, a check for the balance due will be mailed when the judging is completed.
11. Random House stipulates that all winning authors will grant it options covering their next two full-length books. If these books prove publishable, Random House will accept them on the terms of its standard book contract and will advance the author \$500 on each. Writers who have conflicting commitments, made prior to entry into the competition, will not be affected by this stipulation.
12. In the event that material submitted falls short of desired standards, the judges reserve the right to withdraw all or any part of this offer.
13. This competition closes at midnight, May 1st, 1939, and all winners will be announced as soon as possible after that date.
14. Address all manuscripts to: Short Novel Competition, *Scribner's Magazine*, 570 Lexington Avenue, New York.

Modern Romances, 149 Madison Ave., New York, offers prizes of \$15, \$10, and \$5 for best comments on or criticisms of the magazine each month. It also pays \$10 for all publishable letters of 1000 words or less on problems of readers.

The Southwestern Indiana Civic Association has extended the deadline for submitting a Lincoln play in its \$1000 prize contest from January 1 to April 1, 1939. The contest is for the purpose of securing a play of three or more acts written around the life of Abe Lincoln as spent in Indiana in the years between 1816 and 1830. The Association recommends that playwrights pattern their play along the lines of the successful Lincoln play now running in New York, entitled "Lincoln in Illinois." To every one sending for rules of the contest, and enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope, there will be sent a two-page article giving suggested book titles and other valuable information. Address Ernest W. Owen, secretary, 242 E. Twelfth St., Indianapolis, Ind. In addition to the prize, the Association will assist in producing the successful play and securing its publication, with additional opportunities for royalties to the author.



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TRADE JOURNAL DEPARTMENT

Edited by JOHN T. BARTLETT

Used Car Merchandiser, 2842 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich., recently announced by the Bramson Publishing Co., as a new publication for all automobile dealers, is not yet in the market for material. F. W. Munro, of the editorial department, writing to a contributor, said: "Our editorial plans in connection with the early issues of this magazine are rapidly being completed and we have available so much material from various sources and of our own preparation that we do not believe that we will be able to utilize any of the stories or illustrations sent us. . . . If, at a later date, we do need such material as you can supply we will communicate with you specifically suggesting the type of data or articles we desire. We would prefer to operate in this way."

The Nabob Magazine, 367-377 Water St., Vancouver, B. C., reports that it does not accept any feature contributions, as it has no appropriation for purchase of manuscripts.

Meat Merchandising, 105 S. Ninth St., St. Louis, Mo., will pay \$1 for brief items (25 to 100 words) on how meat merchants make more money, according to Frank J. Maher, editor.

Garrison's Magazine, 40 Worth St., New York City, Flint Garrison, editor, reports that it wishes more material from small department stores.

Surgical Business, 220 Elizabeth Ave., Newark, N. J., enlightening contributors as to its editorial scope, gave the following information: *Surgical Business* does not go to doctors or hospitals. It does not contain medical or surgical information. It concerns itself only with the selling information affecting supplies and equipment used by doctors and hospitals. . . . There are two types of surgical dealers—the supply dealer who sells the products used in the normal conduct of a physician's practice and a hospital's operation; the appliance dealer who sells trusses, surgical belts, braces, artificial limbs, artificial eyes, hearing aids, surgical dressings, nurses' uniforms, etc. . . . Most important need is trade news. Features should not run more than 1200 words and should deal with problems dealers and salesmen encounter in selling to hospitals and doctors. . . . Product stories require a great deal of research on marketing and selling of specific products, and probably are better left alone by the free lance. . . . Pictures are always desired. Dramatic or pattern photos bring as much as \$10; others \$2.

Sporting Goods Journal, 330 S. Wells St., Chicago, announces that E. V. Perkins is publishing director.

Western Truck Owner, 412 E. Sixth St., Los Angeles, Calif., is not in the market for material.

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V. INSPIRATION AND THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

"What of inspiration?" the writer who has followed this series thus far may ask. "Must every story be the result of laborious search for an idea, and the methodical development of that idea in conformity with a rigid formula?"

Far from it; but when we speak of inspiration we are, without realizing it, probably referring to the process outlined in the preceding lesson, which consists of recognizing plot germs and developing them into stories. When a so-called inspiration occurs, the process has taken place in the realm of the subconscious mind.

The majority of writers have enjoyed the experience of having a living story pop into the mind, apparently full-blown. We hear it said: "The idea came to me just like that!" "The story seemed to write itself."

What transpired undoubtedly was one of two things: A story germ—a suggestion received from some chance source—was received by the subconscious mind and slowly developed, being finally brought to the surface by some associated suggestion. Or else the germinal idea was so quickly developed by the instinctive processes of the mind that it seemed to evolve in a flash. In either case, the subconscious mind—about which we know very little but which unquestionably is the most important factor involved in creative work—played a vital part.

Inspiration is a delightful method of conceiving story ideas—it is so easy, and its results usually are so vastly superior to the results of humdrum, plodding effort. The only drawback is that it is so unreliable. The author who waits for inspiration will probably write very few stories. Thus the familiar advice which tells us to depend upon perspiration rather than inspiration.

Fortunately, we can induce the processes involved in inspiration by definite methods. If an inspiration is not forthcoming when needed—and it rarely is—we can achieve its results in a fairly dependable manner by consciously being alert for story ideas. Largely, this is a matter of training ourselves to recognize a story germ when we see it.

The first step is to realize that possible stories lie everywhere. They are not rare and scattered, but are buzzing around us in teeming millions, waiting to be recognized. Skilled writers have demonstrated, times without number, that they can evolve a plot around any given object or subject—a design in some piece of tapestry, a bottle of ink, a shop window, a child staring at its reflection in the water, a tree, a speeding automobile, a storm cloud, a piece of string. (De Maupassant's famous story bears witness.)

The difficulty, obviously, is not in the lack of possible material, but in our inability to respond. However, the ability to sense story value in slight things may be developed.

One method of doing this is consciously to evolve plots, according to the previously outlined formula. The conscious process gradually becomes instinctive, and is then carried on by the subconscious mind. The experienced author learns to depend upon his subconscious mind for a large share of the work involved in the origination and development of story material.

The process may be likened to the planting of a seed. The writer selects his seed—the germinal idea—cultivates the soil as carefully as possible, provides it with water, sunshine, and the proper amount of shelter, then leaves the rest to nature.

After putting the idea out of mind for several hours, a day, or some other period of time, the author returns to it, and attempts to write the story. It is surprising to find, after such a period of incubation, that an opening situation has begun to take form, and that the sequence of events leading to a climax is already half-defined. Writing the story, in fact, becomes largely a matter of remembering it—of reporting what took place.

If the germinal idea has not so developed; if it does not seem to take form and if the attempt to write it brings no results, the incubation period will have to be prolonged. It is well to go over the whole idea, adding new suggestions—for there probably will be some additional thoughts with which to nourish it, some new angles of approach—before replanting the seed. The idea may have to be taken out and studied several times before the germination process is complete; but if it has the element of life—if it is not inherently sterile—the time will come when the story is ready to be written.

Experienced authors sometimes carry such germinal ideas around with them for months, even years, before the right angle of approach occurs to them, and they feel the urge to write the story. Often, the slowness of development may be due to some missing factor. Norma Patterson, in an interview published in *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST*, told how a visit to a government hospital preceded the writing of her first war novel. The basic material and the desire to write the novel had lain dormant in her mind for some time, but the emotional urge which gave it impetus to grow resulted from the hospital incident.

Just as it takes an oak longer to develop from an acorn than it does for the sunflower to develop from its seed, so it may be said in general that the greatest stories are the result of slow growth in the soil of the subconsciousness. But the writer for popular magazines, especially if his living depends upon it, cannot wait for this process. He must train the subconscious mind to produce regularly and frequently.

All this may appear to border on the esoteric. The only reply to the skeptical is that the theory of the subconscious mind explains something which otherwise is not explained. It would be difficult to find a successful writer who does not employ the principles here set forth, or who would deny that the subconscious mind plays a vital part in his work. It may

safely be asserted that every experienced writer knows that his best work is done when the subconscious rather than conscious element dominates. When the subconscious mind fails to deliver, and the conscious mind must perforce take over the job, the result is likely to be labored, dull, and lacking in the breath of life.

The problem, therefore, is to make the subconscious mind function as consistently as possible. The process has been explained in this and the preceding lesson—insofar as anything so intangible may be explained. The author plants a seed—suggests a problem—and leaves the rest to nature. He expects the subconscious mind to work with the problem and present the answer. Apparently the subconscious mind does its best work during sleep—when the conscious mind is not active as a restricting influence. Thus it is well, as a rule, to allow a sleep period to intervene between the planting of the seed and the attempt to work out a finished story. Often it will be found that thinking about the problem as one drops off to sleep helps to start the subconscious processes of development.

It is not advisable to make an effort of the will in connection with the subconscious mind. In other words, don't *try* to think the problem out; don't try to compel the consciousness to work on it. Merely think idly about the problem; play with the idea. As soon as this seems to involve effort, put it out of mind and think of other things.

Many writers find it helpful to occupy the conscious mind with recreations or other pursuits entirely unrelated to writing. Thus, the author who devotes part of his day to creative work and the rest to golf, fishing, gardening, hiking, or some hobby—even to a business or regular occupation—may accomplish more than one who spends all his time at his desk. Often when the mind seems completely engrossed in the occupation of the moment, an answer to some plot difficulty will suddenly pop into the head, unbidden. Washing dishes, hoeing in the garden, or tending a machine, may serve the same purpose. The basic principle seems to be that the conscious mind, when it is lulled into quietude and is entirely free from strain, is in the best condition to receive messages from the subconscious mind.

It is not only in evolving a plot that the subconscious mind may be made to serve. Particularly when the writer strikes a snag in the actual writing of a story is it helpful to turn to the subconscious mind for help. The hero is in a predicament from which there is seemingly no escape. Puzzling over the situation and figuring out a solution by sheer effort of the will may result in a commonplace, artificial solution. It is far better, at this point, to put the story aside and turn to some such occupation as suggested above. Going for a walk is especially helpful. Even if a solution does not pop into the mind during the hike, the subconscious mind is probably working on the problem, and at the next sitting before the typewriter the whole thing will clear itself up as if by magic.

This process is not inevitable—it is not wholly dependable—but experienced writers know that it *usually* works. Those who cannot make it work—who are unable to establish this rapport between the conscious and unconscious processes of the mind—are definitely handicapped for a writing career.

But the subconscious mind—as intimated in our preceding lesson—must be subjected to a certain amount of training and discipline. The writer must be exacting with it, refusing to accept a mediocre plot, a mediocre solution of the problem involved. If he is easily pleased, the subconsciousness will inevitably offer him such mediocre wares.

The conscious mind of the author must sternly impress upon the subconscious mind that it will not ac-

cept anything short of its best. He must, in effect, say: "No; this won't do. It is hackneyed, weak, and commonplace. Come now—you can do better!"

When this has been firmly impressed on the subconsciousness, the quality of plots which it produces—the solutions for minor problems of development—will definitely be of better quality.

Presumably, the conscious and unconscious minds are different phases of one and the same intelligence. But however this may be, they *seem* to function almost as two different entities. The conscious mind is the entity that directs what is to be done, and sees that it is done; the subconscious mind is the entity that does the work. It has infinite capabilities—in fact it *can* do just about anything; but it has no initiative of its own. The conscious mind must learn to control and direct it.

All degrees of such control are possible. The writer who has attained even partial mastery is well on the way to success. There is always conscious work to be done, of course, but when the subconscious mind has been fairly well trained, the conscious processes of mind will consist largely of translating and transcribing the stories evolved in the reservoir of the subconsciousness.

PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS

1. If you have known the experience of having a fully developed story idea "pop into your head," reflect upon it and see if you can recall the incident in your experience which furnished the germinal idea to be developed in the subconscious mind.

2. Set yourself the task of writing a story about some simple object—a book, a door, a tree stump—anything that fancy suggests. After letting the mind dwell on its possibilities for a while, put it aside for the subconsciousness to work on. After a day or so, sit down and try to write or outline a story growing out of the idea. Do you find that the idea takes form more easily at this writing? If the story is not completely ready for writing, put it aside for another day or so and repeat the process.

3. Imagine two or more unusual characters and leave to the subconscious mind the problem of evolving a story about them. The characters may be real persons or may be purely synthetic—"made up." They might be selected by glancing through the illustrations of a magazine, or by employing a mechanical plotting device, such as Deal-a-Plot. Perhaps the more contradictory and incongruous the characters, the better for the purpose of this exercise. (For illustration: employing Deal-a-Plot we obtain such combinations as a "profligate missionary," an "impulsive enchantress," and an "intoxicated cartoonist." Or again: a "patriotic gangster," a "pessimistic milkmaid," and a "coy acrobat." If, after a period of incubation, the idea does not seem to "jell," select one or two additional characters and try again.

4. Devise a problem, which may be either the basis of a story or an incident therein; make it as difficult as possible, and then, after a day or so, see if the subconscious mind has been able to suggest a solution. (Suggestive problems: A young man discovers that the girl he loves has secretly become engaged to a rival; how can it be shown that she really loves the hero and is not actually disloyal to him? The hero confesses to a crime which he did not commit; why? A boy who has always been ambitious and interested in his studies suddenly becomes morose and refuses, for no apparent reason, to make any attempt to pass his examinations; why? Refuse to accept commonplace, obvious solutions from the subconscious mind; demand that the solutions shall be logical yet different from those that the average person would think of.

Have You Creative Blindness?

Creative blindness, fatal to most beginning writers, is inability to judge one's own work. It arises as a writer's reaction to his finished story is affected by his strong interest in the subject and the mental experience of putting to paper. The condition is common among novices, occasional among professionals.

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